



H. T. HARVEY & ASSOCIATES
ECOLOGICAL CONSULTANTS

7 November 2013

Hamid Hekmat, AIA, LEED AP
Architect
SiliconSage™ Builders, LLC.
3333 Bowers Ave #236
Santa Clara, California 95054
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SUBJECT: Almaden Road Parcels Riparian Assessment (Parcel Numbers 50 through 55)

Dear Mr. Hekmat,

We've finished our riparian assessment of the parcels (Numbers 50 through 55) located along Almaden Road in San Jose. The closest major cross street is Willow Glen Way situated to the north of these parcels. As you are aware, the two southern parcels (Numbers 54 and 55) are situated closest to the Guadalupe River; although there are developed parcels, both residential and commercial, situated in between Parcels 54 and 55 and the river.

Our task was to determine the edge of riparian habitat associated along this reach of the Guadalupe River. Following various guidelines developed by the resource agencies, riparian habitat is generally defined by a combination of topographic features, top-of-bank, and plant type and distribution. The topographic top-of-bank, or hinge point, is the narrowest demarcation of the riparian habitat which occurs when for various reasons there are no native or naturalized trees and shrub species growing beyond the top-of-bank. This occurs in many settings when there is a paucity of water in the creek, or when vegetation has been removed in prior years as part of development. In other instances, the riparian vegetation can extend many hundreds of feet beyond the top-of-bank.

As part of our analysis, we visited the subject parcels and adjacent properties to gain a full view of the top-of-bank of the creek and associated vegetation. Access was possible from Almaden Road and Guadalupe Avenue. The top-of-bank is easily observable as development of various types has encroached literally within inches of the river bank and the entire length of the top-of-bank is demarcated by chain-link or wooden property fences. Open views of the study area are also clearly visible with GoogleEarth and Bing Maps. Vegetation growing north and northeast of the creek in the vicinity of the study parcels was entirely comprised of planted ornamental trees or invasive species. None of these species is native to Santa Clara Valley and none occur as "extensions" of native riparian trees.



As such, it is our professional opinion that the lateral limits of riparian habitat along this specific reach of the Guadalupe River is defined by the topographic top-of-bank.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 408.458.3204 or via email (pboursier@harveyecology.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick J. Boursier", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patrick J. Boursier, Ph.D.
Principal, Senior Plant Ecologist